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## THE NEW SYRIAN SITUATION

### I. A confused situation

- A. Shishakli four-year dictatorship  
replaced by temporary civilian  
government currently supported by army.
- B. Octogenarian, President Hashem al Atassi;  
has been labeled senile, willing tool  
of extremist rebels and pro-Iraqi;  
coalition cabinet; army in background.

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RECLASSIFIED BY *RS* CLASS CHANGED TO: *RS* BY *RS*  
NEXT REVIEW DATE AUTH: *RS* 16-79  
DATE: *RS* REVIEWER: *RS*

1. Prime Minister Asali, one of five  
Nationalists, four Populists and  
three Independents.
  - a. Nationalists are remains  
independence movement against  
French prior 1945.
  - b. Some Populists favor union with  
Iraq.
2. Defense Minister Dawalibi,  
opportunistic, leftist, anti-Western,  
pan-Islamist support of Mufti,

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~~Moslem Brotherhood~~ ~~SECRET~~

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3. Foreign Affairs Minister Faydi

Atassi, experienced pro-Western  
nephew of president.

4. Army leaders not unified; none  
dominant.

**II. Anticipated developments**

A. Efforts restore 1951 constitutional  
situation will meet difficulties.

Elections promised in two months.

1. Politicians divided; none popular;  
poor party organization. Exiled  
leaders Quwatli and Mardam have  
Saudi financing and may return.

2. Bitter quarrels over union with  
Iraq. Prime Minister reportedly  
received money from Iraq to  
overthrow Shishakli. Some Syrians,  
supported by Saudi Arabia and Egypt,  
oppose union.

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B. New opportunities for radical

socialists, Communists and Moslem  
Brotherhood.

1. Parties' weakness may give leftist  
Akram Hawrani significant role.

Alleged Hawrani partisan is one of  
revolt leaders, Capt. Hamdun.

2. Brotherhood and Communists inspired  
some disturbances; latter tried  
seize radio Damascus.

C. Army will be strongly tempted re-enter  
scene; did so in three 1949 coups;  
followed by Shishakli fully taking over  
in 1951. Struggle for power now on in  
army.

III. Implications for US

Coalition government unable move forward  
on any issue significant to US.

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## SYRIAN POLITICAL PARTIES

### I. National Front

Prominent in independence movement against French prior 1945; wanted republican Syria in power when army took over in 1949.

A. Leaders: Shukri Quwatli, Jamil Mardam, Hashem al Atassi.

B. Members in cabinet: Asali (prime minister), Muhammad Sulayman al Ahmad, Fakhir Kayyali, Afif Suh.

### II. Populist Party

Formed in 1948 in opposition to Quwatli's hold on Nationalists. Largest and most important party, closest to Western type party. Promotes secular, representative democracy, Arab nationalism.

A. Cabinet members: Ma'ruf Dawlibi, Faydi al Atassi.

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DATE: 1-3-80

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III. Arab Socialist Party

Extreme leftist and anti-Western group led by Akram Hawrani. Merged in December 1952 with extremist Arab Resurrection Party.

IV. Syrian Social National Party

Small well-organized group, with branch in Lebanon, aims at re-establishing enlarged Syria existent under Ottoman Empire -- Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, former Palestine and Iraq.

A. Shishakli formerly member.

V. Arab Liberation Movement

Organized by Shishakli in 1952. Can be assumed to be inoperative.

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